Time To Act . . .

Saskatchewan Children's Advocate 1999 Annual Report

The Saskatchewan
ADVOCATE
Office

Advocating with children, youth and their natural advocates to ensure the rights of children and youth are respected and valued.

100-05165/

The Saskatchewan ADVOCATE office

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SASKATCHEWAN

May 2000

The Honourable Ronald Osika
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Building
Province of Saskatchewan
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*, it is my privilege to submit to you and to the Members of the Legislative Assembly my fifth Annual Report as Children's Advocate.

Respectfully,

Parker-Loewen

Deborah Parker-Loewen, Ph.D.
Children's Advocate
Province of Saskatchewan

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The Children's Advocate is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan and acts pursuant to *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*.

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From the Children's Advocate

Deborah Parker-Loewen
Children's Advocate

In these first five years as Children's Advocate I have been faced with many challenges. What I have come to realize is that each decision and each action I take must be grounded in a set of values or principles.

Some fundamental principles have been established in this Office and I have emphasized these throughout this Annual Report. These principles have formed the blueprint for action that my staff and I use to guide our work. This year I have changed the format of my Annual Report in order to outline the principles and objectives of my Office in relation to the activities we have engaged in throughout the year.

The work of this Office is directed by *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*. This Act directs me to engage in four specific activities: public education; individual and group advocacy; systemic advocacy; and research. I am also responsible for the administrative functions of my Office, including financial management, human resources, policy development and other management activities. This Annual Report details the operational principles of my Office in relation to these areas of activity.

Three major initiatives added to the pressures on my Office in 1999. My Office now reviews the deaths of all children who were receiving specific services from the Department of Social Services. In 1999, we added one Advocate to our staff who is responsible for reviewing these deaths and coordinating the follow-up. We are also developing protocols with a number of government Departments and with First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies.

The second initiative that challenged my Office this past year was completing the *Children and Youth in Care Review*. By December 1999 the consultation phase of the project was completed and we were left with the task of preparing the final report. While this report was not released in 1999, the major work was completed in 1999 and I decided to summarize the results of this Review in this Annual Report.

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One of the very positive aspects of this Review was the opportunity I had to travel throughout the province and meet with many Saskatchewan people who are concerned about children and youth who live in the care of the government. My travels in northern Saskatchewan were compelling. The northern citizens I met in the communities of Beauval, Cumberland House, Stoney Rapids, Black Lake, Ile-a-la-Crosse, La Loche and others, have clearly pointed out to me that the Children's Advocate must be more available and accessible to northern residents.

"Consultations have made clear that Saskatchewan people want a Children's Advocate who will be a voice for children and youth in crisis, will have a role in community education and prevention; an advocate who is independent of the control or influence of any government department or minister, and is visible and accessible to the community...The Children's Advocate will play a significant role in ensuring the rights of Saskatchewan children and youth, that they are protected."

Honourable Bob Pringle, Minister of Social Services. Committee of the Whole. Hansard. Friday, March 11, 1994.

The third initiative is one that has been exciting for our Office and for the young people we serve. In 1998, the Office supported the development of a Provincial Youth Delegation. This Delegation met regularly over the past year and a half. They have established a set of objectives and are working towards achieving them. A part-time Youth Facilitator also joined my Office in 1999.

The celebration of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* by the General Assembly of the United Nations was a highlight of 1999. The Children's Advocate and the Provincial Youth Delegation, with the assistance of the Regina YWCA, hosted a walk to the Legislative Building in Regina, followed by a celebratory event. Recognizing our collective responsibilities to ensure the realization of children's rights continues to be an important goal.

Many families in our province are experiencing difficult times, both financially and emotionally. Community members and government need to find ways to continue to work together to support all families and children — especially those who are most vulnerable. This is not someone else's responsibility - we cannot just hope that someone else will do something — we have to do it together.

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Public Education

The Children's Advocate Office conducts public education to raise the profile of the rights of all children in Saskatchewan. The Office strives to develop and enhance a sense of individual and community responsibility for protecting and promoting children's rights.

Getting the Word Out

The Children's Advocate Office (CAO) has been serving Saskatchewan children for five years, and yet, many children and youth still are not aware of the Office and its role to assist young people.

In 1999, an education and awareness campaign for children and youth was launched. The goal of the campaign was to clarify to young people why they may need to contact the Office for assistance and outline the process that occurs when they call.

Two groups were the focus for the campaign: children and youth in foster care and youth in young offender facilities. Two brochures and two promotional items, playing cards and door-knob hangers, were developed. Information for the materials was developed with input from youth who contacted the CAO, as well as input from approximately 100 other children and youth, who participated in focus testing sessions across the province. With assistance from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, information packages were sent to the approximately 830 foster homes in Saskatchewan. Packages were also sent to the 13 provincial young offender facilities. CAO staff continue to distribute the new materials to children and youth who contact the Office.

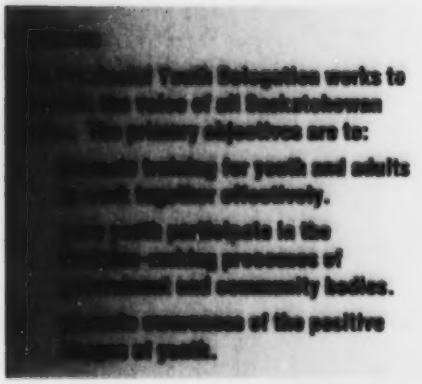
In 1999, staff responded to over 113 requests for resources and information on such topics as children's advocacy, children's rights, foster care, child deaths, youth participation, corporal punishment, poverty and sexual exploitation of children and youth, to name just a few. Staff completed 84 presentations about the role of the CAO and issues relating to the interests and well-being of children. In addition, as part of the *Children and Youth in Care Review*, the Children's Advocate and the Review Team shared information about the CAO with 92 groups across Saskatchewan. *One More Voice for Children's Rights*, the CAO newletter, was distributed to over 5,000 individuals and agencies across Saskatchewan.

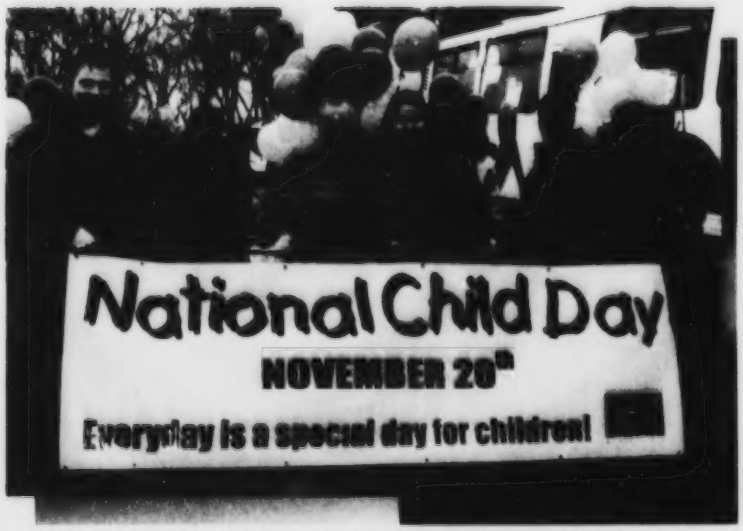
The Provincial Youth Delegation

Young people from across Saskatchewan have been saying that they want to have a way to participate in decision-making and policy development – particularly when decisions and policies affect them. With the assistance of the CAO, youth from across the province have come together to voice their ideas and concerns.

Established in June 1998, the Provincial Youth Delegation continued to evolve in 1999. Delegates clarified membership criteria and decided that hiring a Youth Coordinator would be a priority. A part-time Youth Coordinator joined the CAO in December 1999. The Youth Coordinator's role is to perform the administrative and organizational tasks of the Delegation.

The Delegation plans to focus on increasing the membership of the Delegation in 2000. A nomination process was developed and forms can be obtained from the Youth Coordinator at the CAO. In addition, the Provincial Youth Delegation, in collaboration with the CAO, the Saskatchewan Council on Children and the Interdepartmental Child Action Plan Steering Committee, is planning a workshop in the fall of 2000.





Provincial Youth Delegates at the National Child Day Celebration, November 17, 1999

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Mission

The Provincial Youth Delegation works to promote the voice of all Saskatchewan youth. The primary objectives are to:

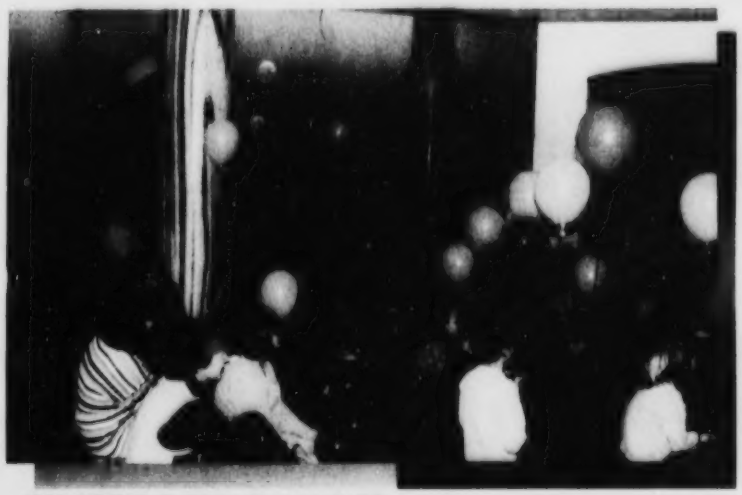
- **promote training for youth and adults to work together effectively.**
- **have youth participate in the decision-making processes of government and community bodies.**
- **promote awareness of the positive images of youth.**

Provincial Youth Delegates at the National Child Day Celebration, November 17, 1999

National Child Day

10th Anniversary of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

As 1999 was the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* by the General Assembly of the United Nations, a celebration of children and youth was in order! The CAO and the Provincial Youth Delegation, with assistance from the Regina YWCA, hosted a walk and celebration on November 17. Children, parents, Saskatchewan Council on Children representatives and government officials joined the delegates and staff of the CAO in walking to the Legislative Building where a reception was held. Members of the Legislative Assembly, representing the three provincial parties, the co-chair of the Saskatchewan Council on Children and the chair of the Provincial Youth Delegation spoke at the event. Entertainment was provided by Brenda Baker, children's entertainer.



National Child Day Participants, November 17, 1999.
Photo taken in the Saskatchewan Gallery, Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

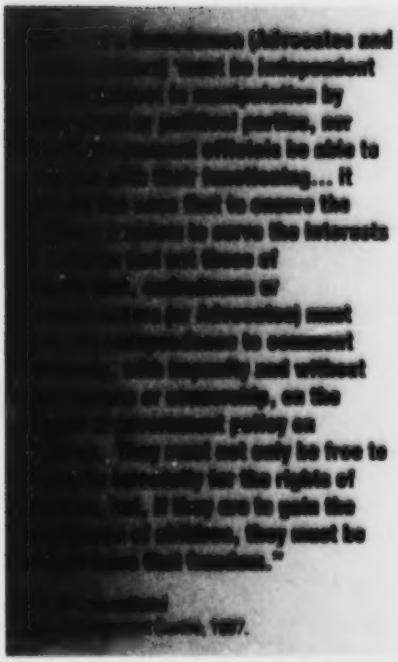
An Independent Officer

The government announced, in the Speech from the Throne on December 6, 1999, that *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* would be amended in this session of the Legislature.

Any amendments to *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* should be based on well-established principles. The Act is currently respectful of many of the principles that define an independent officer. The Children's Advocate has the authority to conduct independent reviews and investigations, has access to documents, entry to facilities and institutions and the ability to require individuals to give evidence.

The Children's Advocate has the authority to make recommendations to government officials and to the Minister responsible for a government department or agency. In addition, the Children's Advocate can issue special reports to the Legislative Assembly and to the public.

As the Children's Advocate Office was new to Saskatchewan just five years ago, it is timely to consider amendments. There are amendments of a primarily functional nature that could assist this Office in its day-to-day work. For example, children who are permanent or long-term wards may enter into an agreement with the Department of Social Services (DSS) for extended support up to age 21 and these young people contact the CAO from time to time for assistance. An amendment to the definition of age would clarify the mandate of the CAO to assist these young people. There are amendments that would clarify the relationship of the Children's Advocate and the Provincial Ombudsman, thus making it clear that while there are shared administrative functions and some common goals, both are independent officers of the Assembly with separate mandates and authority.



The independence of a Children's Advocate is a critical aspect of the real and perceived authority of the Office. The independence of the Children's Advocate is supported in many ways by the current Act. The appointment of the Children's Advocate is based on a recommendation from the Legislative Assembly and the all-party Board of Internal Economy recommends the budget for the Office. Amending the Act offers an opportunity to strengthen the independence of the Office by reviewing the terms of Office and the process used to establish the salary of the Children's Advocate. Appointing a Children's Advocate for one fixed term of, for example ten years, rather than two terms of five years as the Act currently provides, would assure continuity and stability to the Office and to the public while also providing the incumbent with sufficient time to promote positive changes on behalf of children. Ideally, the salary for an independent officer should not be determined by the government, but should be non-negotiable and fixed in some clear manner. The Act currently provides for the Children's Advocate salary to be determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (Cabinet). This leaves potential for the salary to be negotiated, which is not consistent with the principles of independence.

The government's announcement that the Act will be amended is welcomed and it is anticipated that the amendments will further the efficiency and effectiveness of the Children's Advocate Office.

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"Children's Ombudsmen (Advocates and Commissioners) 'must be independent and not subject to manipulation by government or political parties, nor should government officials be able to interfere with their functioning... it must be the case that to ensure the optimum freedom to serve the interests of children and not those of government, ombudsman or commissioners (or Advocates) must have the independence to comment adversely, with impunity and without interference or censorship, on the impact of government policy on children. They must not only be free to advocate forcefully for the rights of children, but, if they are to gain the confidence of children, they must be seen to have that freedom."

UNICEF International
Child Development Centre, 1997.

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Individual and Group Advocacy

- Assisting people to become effective self-advocates by providing information, strategies, appropriate contacts and options.
- Assisting young people who are receiving government services to express their viewpoint and have it considered when decisions are being made that affect them.
- Working to ensure that all children, especially vulnerable children, are treated in accordance with existing government practice, policy and legislation.
- Taking further action, when a matter affecting a child or group of children is not resolved or if policy concerns remain. This may include reviewing and investigating all information available and making recommendations to the government for change.

One of the primary functions of the CAO is to provide individual and group advocacy services for individuals who contact the Office. The goal in the Office is to provide advocacy services that are respectful, appropriate and timely. The CAO staff are committed to giving the children and young people who contact the Office priority. I am often asked how my Office specifically assists young people who contact the Office on their own behalf. The following outlines the process used.

When Children or Youth Call

When a youth calls the CAO they talk to an Advocate Assistant (AA) who listens to their concerns. Where able, the youth is provided with information and strategies that they can use to resolve their own concerns and issues. The AA will check back with the youth to see if the concern was resolved.

Where the concern remains unresolved, the AA will offer to provide further assistance. If the youth grants permission, the AA will make inquiries and assist the youth in resolving the concern through various early resolution interventions. Should the concern remain unresolved, the AA will offer the services of an Advocate to the youth. Wherever possible, personal contact will be made with the youth that day or the next and action will be initiated only at the request of the youth.

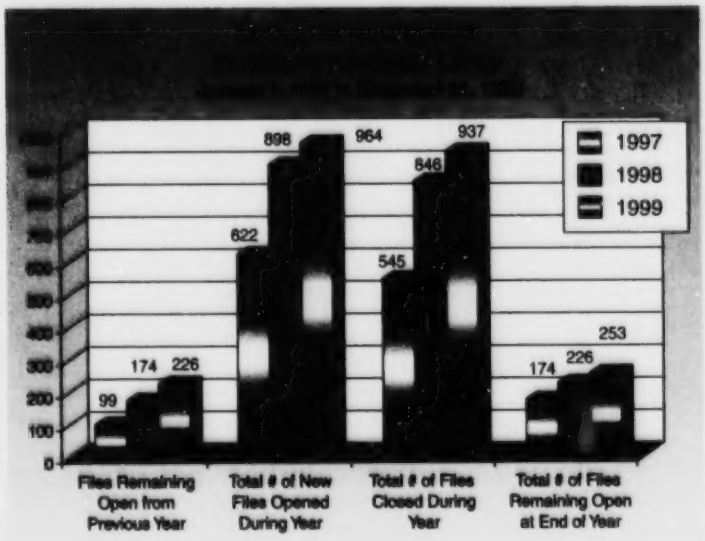
Where the concern relates to a decision or action of a government department or agency, the Advocate will review what happened in practice and check the existing policies. The Advocate may meet with the young person and staff involved with that young person, provide information, promote dialogue, request clarification, offer suggestions, and generally work to resolve the concern. This may include meetings with various government personnel and outside resources.

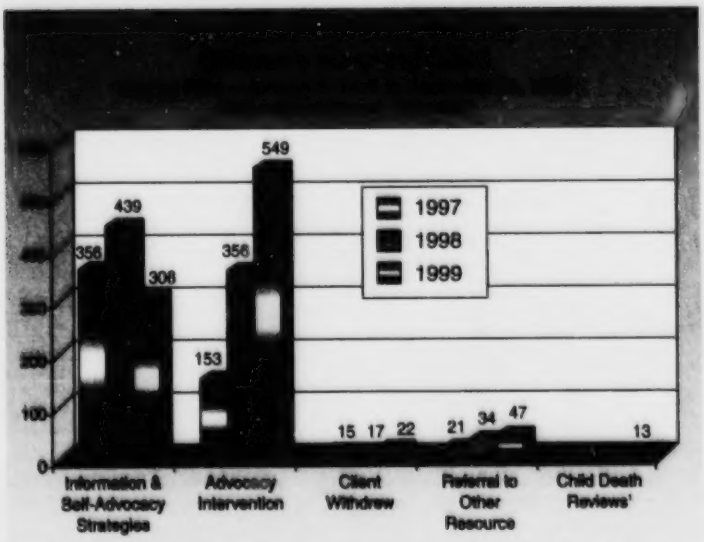
The CAO will also consider formally investigating a concern. This means we will investigate the concern in accordance with *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* and may make recommendations to government if appropriate.

Services in 1999

In previous annual reports, I have outlined the tremendous growth that the Office has experienced. I am pleased to report that in 1999, a total of 964 individual advocacy files were opened; only a seven percent increase over 1998. This modest increase may be an indication that the individual advocacy service demands on the Office are stabilizing.

A total of 937 files were concluded this year. The number of files open at year end was 253. This is a slight increase over the number remaining open last year. The complexity of the individual advocacy files is increasing and with that there has been a gradual increase in the number of files being carried over from year to year. The number of files remaining open at the end of 1999 is manageable, although even a small backlog compounds the demands on Office resources.





[1] Child Death Reviews are being reported separately for the first time. In previous years Child Death Reviews were reported under Advocacy Intervention.

Early Resolution Offered

An Advocate Assistant joined the CAO in July 1998. The Advocate Assistant is responsible for receiving and initially reviewing all new contacts to the Office. The Advocate Assistant provides advocacy to approximately 80 percent of those who request service from the Office. Services provided include clarification of the child serving system, strategies and assistance with self-advocacy, alternative dispute resolution, and referrals where appropriate. The Advocate Assistant offers those who have immediate concerns an opportunity for an early resolution of an issue.

Individual and Group Advocacy

The Children's Advocate Office has the authority to receive and review any matter related to government services affecting a child or a group of children. Individual and group advocacy services include:

- Assisting people to become effective self-advocates by providing information, strategies, appropriate contacts and options.
- Assisting young people who are receiving government services to express their viewpoint and have it considered when decisions are being made that affect them.
- Working to ensure that all children, especially vulnerable children, are treated in accordance with existing government practice, policy and legislation.
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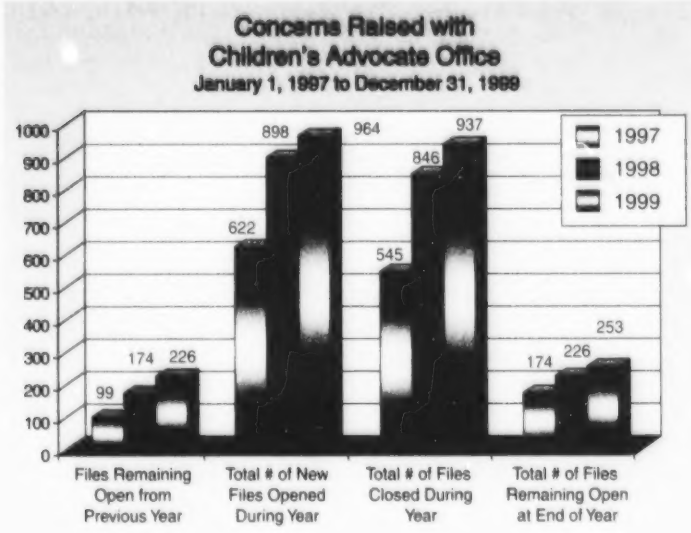

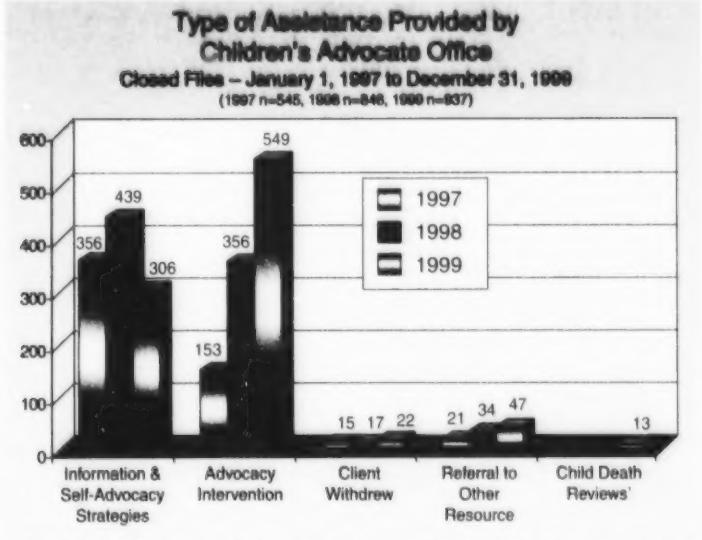

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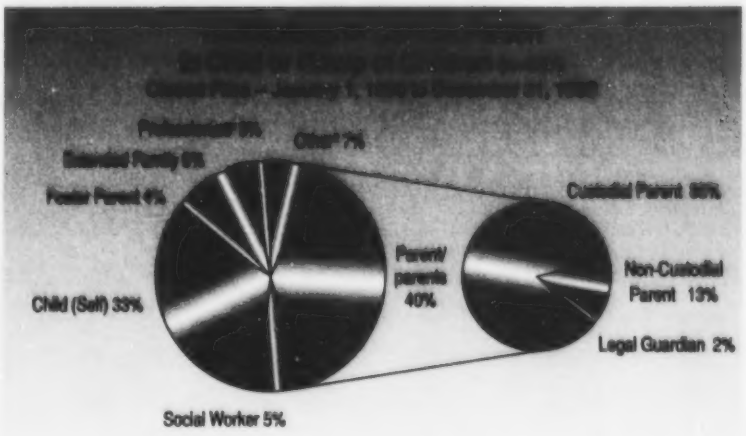
Who is Calling?

Providing services directly to children and youth is a priority for the Children's Advocate Office. Since the inception of the Office there has been a continuous increase in the number of children and youth who call on their own behalf. Thirty-three percent (33%) of all closed files in 1999 were initiated by children or youth. The number of youth requesting services increased from 196 calls in 1998 to 306 calls in 1999 (closed files). This represents a 56 percent increase in the number of children and youth contacting the Office. Many children, by virtue of their age or circumstances, are unable to initiate contact on their own. Thus, concerned family members raise the majority of the concerns, initiating 40 percent of all files.



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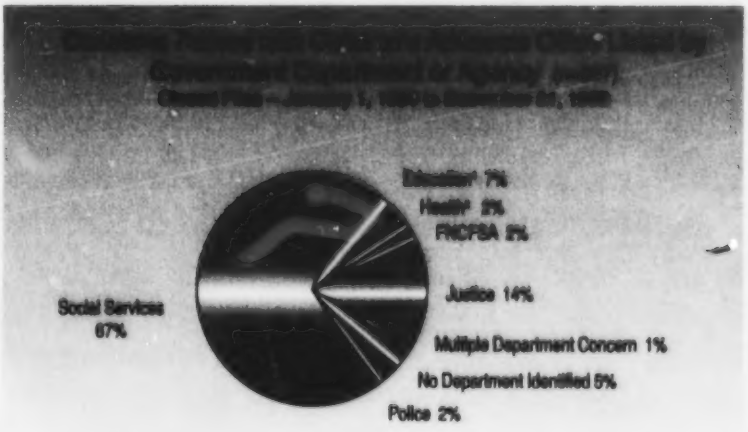
The reasons individuals contact the CAO continues to remain relatively consistent from year to year. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of concerns raised were regarding services provided by the Department of Social Services. This continues to represent the largest group of calls to Office.



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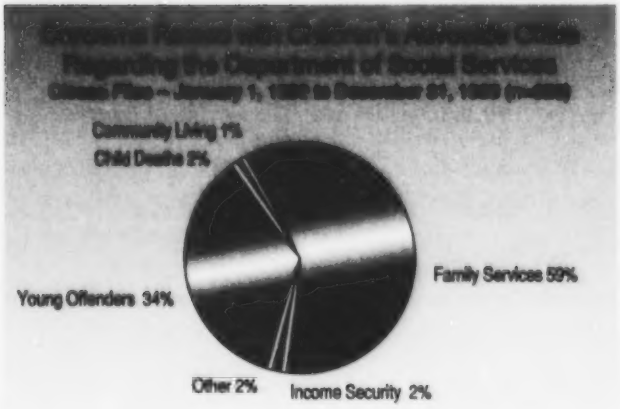
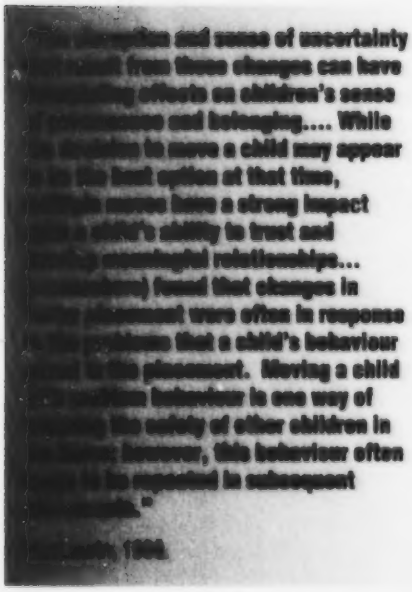
Social Services

The number of closed files regarding the DSS in 1999 increased by 27 percent over 1998 (493 in 1998, compared to 626 in 1999). This increase can be attributed to a substantial increase in the number of concerns brought to the Office by youth in the young offender system. There was an 83 percent increase over the previous year (115 in 1998, compared to 210 in 1999). The dominant issue cited by the youth was unfair treatment, particularly in relation to discipline practices in the youth facilities.



Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the concerns raised about the DSS related to child protection or foster care. The vast majority of these concerns were case management issues. These files were almost exclusively concluded with no formal investigation. A formal investigation is rarely initiated as most individual issues are satisfactorily resolved.

During 1999, the CAO completed a comprehensive review of the needs of children living in foster care. The final report, *Children and Youth in Care Review: LISTEN to Their Voices* will be released in April 2000. The advocacy files in the CAO reflect the issues and concerns identified in the Review report.



Case Example – Stability

A youth called the CAO after his worker told him that he would be returning to live with his mother within the next two weeks. He had not lived with his mother for six years and she now lived in another region. He objected to this plan and wrote to the DSS. The DSS had not responded to his objections to the move and he did not feel that his concerns were being acknowledged. This youth was in a foster home where he felt safe and connected. He was doing well at school; he had friends and felt part of the community. Furthermore, he did not believe that his mother was able to provide him with a safe and stable environment.

An Advocate assisted him in presenting his concerns to the DSS. The Advocate arranged a multi-region/ agency meeting. The outcome was that this youth was assured that he would remain with his present foster family until he finished high school. He agreed to maintain regular contact with his biological family.

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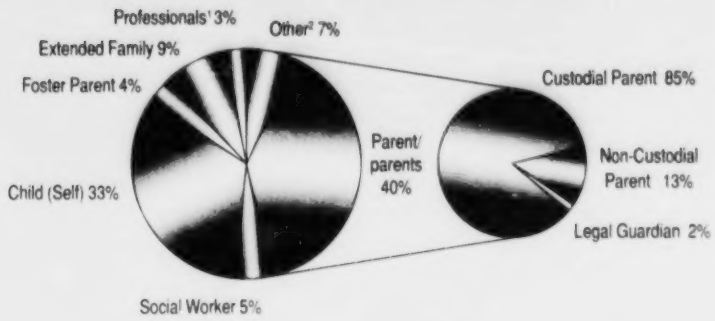
Relationship of Contact Person to Child or Group of Children (n=937)
Closed Files – January 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999



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Concerns Raised with Children's Advocate Office Listed by Government Department or Agency (n=937)
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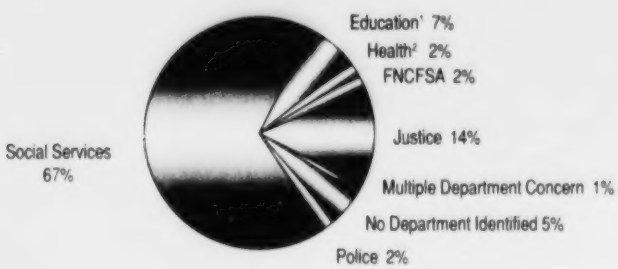

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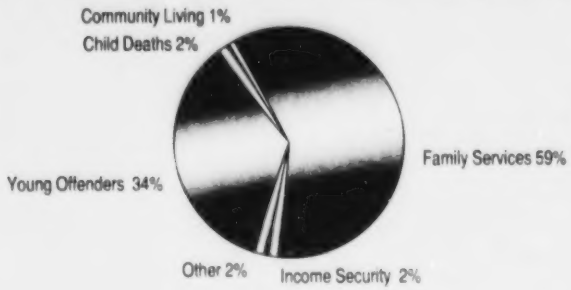
Concerns Raised with Children's Advocate Office Regarding the Department of Social Services
Closed Files – January 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999 (n=626)



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"The disruption and sense of uncertainty that result from these changes can have devastating effects on children's sense of permanence and belonging.... While the decision to move a child may appear to be the best option at that time, multiple moves have a strong impact upon a child's ability to trust and develop meaningful relationships... (researchers) found that changes in foster placement were often in response to the problems that a child's behaviour posed in the placement. Moving a child with problem behaviour is one way of ensuring the safety of other children in the home; however, this behaviour often tends to be repeated in subsequent placements."

MacLaurin, 1998.

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Case Example – Medical Services

A biological mother called on behalf of her six-year-old son who was living in foster care. While visiting her son, the mother noticed an object embedded in his ear. She notified both the DSS and the caregiver of her concern. On a subsequent visit, she observed that the object was still in the ear and it was now infected. This mother was upset that her son was not getting needed medical treatment and she did not feel respected or listened to. The DSS policy stipulates that in non-emergency medical situations "the primary caregiver of the child in care is responsible to seek appropriate medical attention." The Advocate Assistant helped to resolve this issue by drawing the DSS's attention to this as an urgent matter. As a result, a wood splinter roughly the size of a nickel was removed from the child's ear.

Case Example – Access to Education

A permanent ward contacted the CAO after receiving a letter from the DSS advising that his Section 56 (Educational Assistance for Former Wards) Agreement was cancelled. The young person was notified two weeks prior to school commencement that the financial support he required to continue with his post-secondary education was no longer available and that he was expected to find alternative funding. The youth requested assistance in appealing this decision. The Advocate Assistant requested information about this situation and assisted the young person in resolving the matter through direct intervention with the DSS. The DSS agreed to provide funding at the previously agreed rate until the youth reached the age of 21. The youth was able to continue his post-secondary education.

"Most children do not have to suddenly establish themselves as independent adults at age 18, but many of those in care do, even though they may be less able to do so. It is our contention that the high death rates for those approaching 18 years may reflect apprehension about the approaching loss of support (particularly among vulnerable individuals), while the high rate following age 18 represents the reality of having to go unprepared into adult life. Taken together, the findings from this study suggest that it is not the operation of a child welfare system that is the problem, it is the timing and style of the withdrawal of services. This indicates that more attention needs to be devoted to the transition to unsupported life that occurs at age 18."

Child Welfare League of Canada, 1996.

Case Example – Assistance Needed

Following completion of high school, a youth who was receiving financial and other assistance on a Section 10 agreement with the DSS, was accepted into a post-secondary education program. She was required to relocate. She applied for and was granted a student loan. She asked the DSS for financial assistance for her move, including funding for furniture, utility hook-ups and subsidized day care. The DSS refused her request. The youth was told that she should use her student loan funds for those needs.

The Advocate confirmed that DSS policy provides youth with an allowance until student loans are received. The policy also allows for funding for utility hook-ups, furniture, damage deposit and travel. An Advocate assisted this youth to present her issues to the regional director for reconsideration. The outcome was that the funds were granted and the youth was able to relocate and assume her educational studies.

Case Example – Allegations of Abuse

A permanent ward of Saskatchewan contacted the CAO with a complaint about the adequacy of an investigation into his allegations of abuse in a former foster home. The youth, now living in another province with new caregivers, reported being physically abused in his previous foster home and felt the DSS had dismissed his allegations.

The CAO verified that the DSS and the local police had investigated his allegations. A report concluding that the allegation of physical abuse was unfounded had been provided to the youth. The report acknowledged that there had been "inappropriate forms of discipline/ punishment used" and that the DSS had addressed this matter with the foster parent. This youth believed that the investigation was not adequate and that he had not been believed.

"Residents of northern communities feel that their voices are not heard; that they have little or no control of the government policies and programs that impact their lives on a daily basis. In some cases, inappropriate government policy affects them in ways that distort their values and morals. In other situations, government policies and regulations put barriers in the way of community progress. Current government policies are not working... Community-based mechanisms should be established to provide direction to government on the delivery of services (ie. Family Review Panel and local Welfare Boards)."

New North and Saskatchewan Social Services, 1998.

The "discipline" experienced by this youth, while in the care of the former foster home, continued to cause this young person difficulty. He needed an opportunity to bring some closure to this matter. After considerable discussion between the CAO, the departments in both provinces and his present caregivers, the youth was offered a face-to-face meeting with the DSS workers. The youth was brought back to Saskatchewan and was given the opportunity to express his concerns to the workers and to hear the reasons why the investigation had been concluded as unfounded. The file was closed as the youth now felt the situation was resolved.

Case Example – Case Planning/Special Needs

The CAO received a referral from a physician about a three-year-old child with a heart murmur, developmental delays and a possible alcohol related disorder. The child's medical and developmental needs had been significantly neglected. In her three short years, this child had been apprehended and returned home repeatedly and she had experienced as many as ten foster placements. This child required services to address her developmental delays and her medical condition. She also was in need of a stable, nurturing environment in which to grow up.

With CAO involvement, a case plan was created that included a stable long-term placement for this child. Access to the services she required and a permanent plan were provided by the DSS. The CAO file was then closed.

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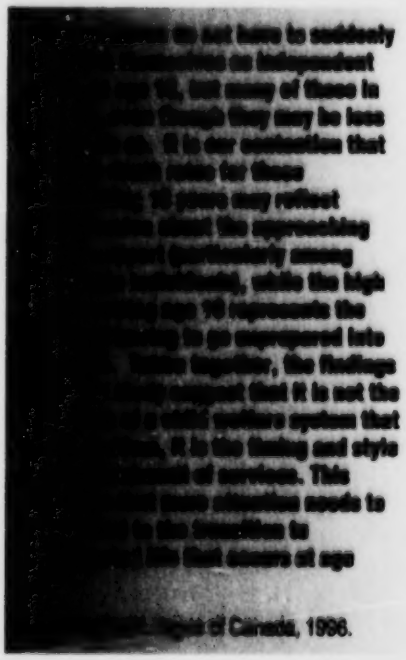

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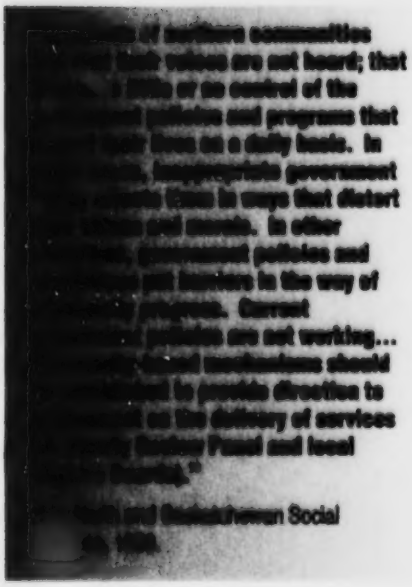

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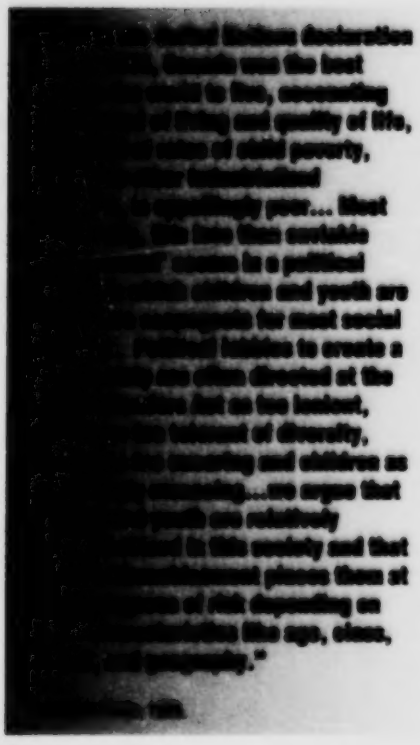
Case Example – The Right to Appeal

A young person contacted the CAO because he felt he had been inaccurately labelled as a sexual offender. He felt this label was affecting his treatment and programming in a secure custody facility. The youth was advised to speak to the unit supervisor and clarify the situation. When the supervisor did not change the designation, the youth called the CAO again and requested assistance to appeal his classification. The CAO assisted the youth in setting up a meeting with the facility managers. At this meeting the youth was able to express his concern. It was agreed that he was not a sexual offender and unit staff were notified that an error had been made. With this change his programming was also changed. The youth was satisfied with the results and the file was closed.

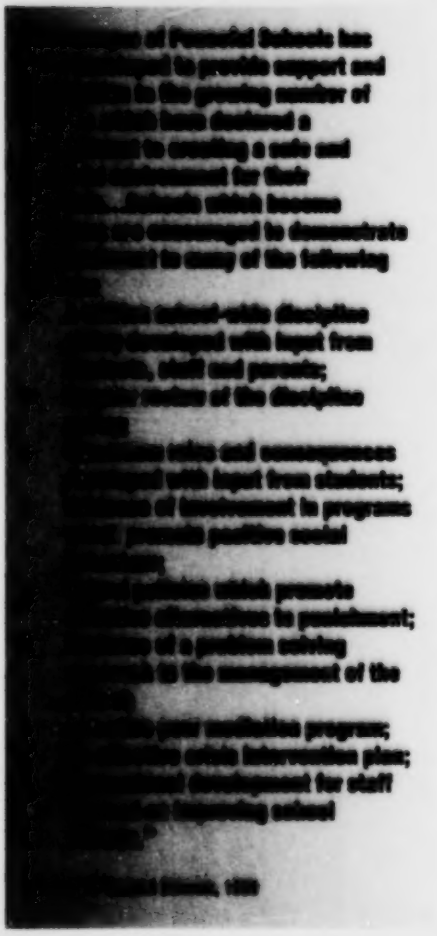


Education

Seven percent (7%) of CAO calls in 1999 related to education issues. Usually, parents contact the CAO requesting assistance in securing resources for children with special needs in the school system, for clarification or avenues of redress for disagreements about the treatment of their children in a school environment, or for assistance in presenting their concerns to the school administration.

Case Example – Right to an Education

A mother called the CAO as she was unable to pay her daughter's school fees. Until the fees were paid, the school would not provide her daughter with a school timetable for the next semester. The mother had negotiated a partial payment with the balance due at the end of semester; however, the school administration began to pressure the daughter at school for full payment, causing her daughter embarrassment. It appeared the school had reconsidered the partial payment arrangement and now wanted full payment without advising the mother. Although the CAO has no jurisdiction over these school matters, information was provided to the mother. This information included the daughter's right to an education, her right to access a conflict resolution process as defined under *The Education Act* and knowledge of the informal appeal process through the school division. The mother was invited to call back if she was unable to resolve the matter on her own.



Case Example – Special Needs

Contact was made with the CAO when a mother felt her daughter's special needs were not being met. Her daughter has Downs Syndrome and was in an early education program. She had been assessed and it was determined that she would require a teacher's assistant. The teacher's assistant and the child were unable to develop a positive relationship and the school decided that the arrangement was not working out. The teacher's assistant was assigned to another student and no replacement had been provided for the first child. Information regarding legislation that provides parents an opportunity to engage in conflict resolution and the appeal process available through the school division was provided to the child's mother.

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"Despite the United Nations declaration that, in 1996, Canada was the best place in the world to live, accounting for standard of living and quality of life, our record of rates of child poverty, relative to other industrialized countries, is appallingly poor... Most importantly, this less than enviable 'social record' occurs in a political context in which children and youth are the modern scapegoats for most social problems. Political lobbies to create a safer society are often directed at the Young Offenders Act as too lenient, schools as too tolerant of diversity, parents as too uncaring and children as increasingly menacing...we argue that children and youth are relatively disenfranchised in this society and that this disenfranchisement places them at varying degrees of risk depending on social characteristics like age, class, gender, and geography."

Schissel & Eisler, 1999.

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"The League of Peaceful Schools has been developed to provide support and recognition to the growing number of schools which have declared a commitment to creating a safe and peaceful environment for their students...Schools which become members are encouraged to demonstrate a commitment to many of the following criteria:

- **A written school-wide discipline policy developed with input from students, staff and parents;**
- **Regular review of the discipline policy;**
- **Classroom rules and consequences developed with input from students;**
- **Evidence of involvement in programs which promote positive social behaviour;**
- **School policies which promote effective alternatives to punishment;**
- **Evidence of a problem solving approach to the management of the school;**
- **An active peer mediation program;**
- **An effective crisis intervention plan;**
- **Professional development for staff focused on improving school climate."**

League of Peaceful Schools, 1999

Justice

Fourteen percent (14%) of the files closed in the CAO in 1999 were Justice related. Of the 128 closed files, 111 or 85 percent were about child custody or access. Parents contact the CAO with concerns about custody and access orders. They express frustration with the lack of government intervention when there is a disagreement about the care provided to a child by the "other" parent. The CAO provides information about appeal processes, existing services and resources. If the concern is about a court order, the CAO explores options such as mediation, custody and access assessments and offers information about resources available through the Family Law Division.

Case Example – Access

A grandmother caring for her grandchildren called expressing concern about the children's mother who had court-ordered access to the children. The order provided the mother weekend access. The children were afraid to go for a visit and repeatedly stated that their mother abused them. The grandmother was given the appeal process and was encouraged to call back if she was unable to resolve the concern.

Case Example – Appeal Processes

One mother contacted the CAO with concerns about her daughter's father having court-ordered access. Her daughter had been sexually abused by step-siblings while on a visit with her father and as a result, only supervised access was allowed. During a recent visit, the father had shown the daughter pictures of these step-siblings and this upset the daughter further. The Family Law Division worker who supervised the visits was not prepared to censor what the father could bring to the visit. The CAO provided information about how to resolve this with the Family Law Division. The mother reported that she was successful in resolving the issue and clarified that now anything brought to a visit by the father must be screened by the worker prior to him sharing it with the daughter.

Health

The number of health issues raised with the CAO continues to be limited, constituting only two percent of calls. The concerns raised to date have been primarily with regard to delay in services such as access to an MRI, or surgical intervention for a child. The need for more mental health services for adolescents has also been raised. In all cases these children were represented by strong parental advocates. The CAO provided information about availability of resources. Parents were advised to contact the Health District or the Department of Health about resource issues.

Case Example – Fair Treatment

A youth was taken to a local hospital in need of medical attention for infected ears. He was advised that he needed surgery and should contact his family doctor. The family called the CAO to complain that their child was treated in a rude and unprofessional manner. The CAO referred the family and the youth to the client representative of the local district health board.

Child Death Reviews

In the fall of 1996, I agreed to review the deaths of all children who were, at the time of their death or in the 12 months preceding their death, receiving services from the DSS. This important work, while difficult, provides the DSS and other child-serving agencies an opportunity to reflect upon the services provided and to promote improvements to services that may prevent similar deaths in the future.

In 1999, a new Advocate position was added to the CAO. This Advocate is primarily responsible for reviewing these deaths. While some form of child death review has been in place in many American states for several years, this is pioneering work in Canada. It has required a significant commitment not only from the Advocate who joined our Office, but also from others in my Office, including our support staff, our management team and our General Counsel.

Between 1996 and December 31, 1999 the CAO received 101 notifications. My Office prioritized completing a review of the 67 deaths that occurred prior to January 1, 1999. By the end of this reporting year 16 reviews had been concluded. It is my intention to finalize the remaining pre-'99 death reviews and make a report of the findings in 2000.

In addition to reviewing individual child deaths, my Office is also working to develop a national child death review network. On May 26, 1999 the CAO partnered with the Child Maltreatment Division of Health Canada to host a national meeting in Saskatoon to discuss *Child Death Reviews and the Child Mortality Data Collection in Canada* (Department of Health Canada, 1999). This was a productive gathering allowing approximately 20 participants from across Canada working in the area of child death reviews, including Children's Advocates, Chief Coroners, Chief Medical Examiners and the British Columbia Children's Commissioner to come together on this issue. A working committee was established to begin the development of a National Child Death Review Network.

I also continue to chair the Provincial Child Death Advisory Committee. This Committee, comprised of members representing organizations concerned about the well-being, interests and protection of children, is advisory to the Chief Coroner and myself. The Committee provides advice on processes used to report and review the deaths of children and monitors the implementation of any recommendations regarding practice or policy questions arising from child deaths.

M121

IMPORTANT NOTE CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING PAGES

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Systemic Advocacy

As a systemic issue, the Children's Advocate's Office promotes and advocates for changes to government practice, policy or legislation respecting the interests and well-being of children. The Office advocates for improvements to processes through which the interests and viewpoints of children may be expressed, considered, and respected by government when it plans and implements services that impact on children. In addition, the Children's Advocate may make formal recommendations to Saskatchewan government departments or agencies relating to the interests and well-being of children.

The CAO in Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring that the well-being of children is a priority in all government practices, policies, legislation and allocation of resources. I believe that the provincial government is also committed to this. Sadly, children in our province do not all experience the good intentions of these commitments! There are still many children who do not receive the care, supports and protection that they need and deserve.

One of my major responsibilities as Children's Advocate is to promote the interests and well-being of Saskatchewan children. The idea of systemic advocacy is to influence systemic changes that will improve the well-being of Saskatchewan children.

"Systemic advocacy is "advocacy on behalf of the child welfare system at a provincial government or community level... to influence those in positions of authority to make decisions that improve services to children."

Saskatchewan Children's Advocate, 1997-1998.

Systemic advocacy issues may be identified in a number of ways. Sometimes several children, young people or community members raise the same issue or concern and a systemic advocacy issue is identified by the frequency of the complaint. Occasionally a single complaint is so compelling that individual advocacy is inadequate – a system change is needed to improve services for all children. Often the issue is a major social issue that impacts or affects children, like poverty or the sexual abuse of children through the sex trade. In the past five years, several systemic issues have been prioritized in my Office and we have utilized a number of different strategies to influence those in authority to improve services for children.

The good news is that rarely does government disagree with the desired outcomes that are identified by my Office. In fact, I think that the pressure I put on government to evaluate programs and services in terms of children's well-being is welcomed. The sad news is that change takes time. While decisions are being made and new practices and policies are being introduced, children and young people do not believe that anyone is listening to them or responding to their needs. While there is significant action in some areas, there are other matters that still need a lot of attention.

What are the systemic issues impacting our children that are of major concern right now?

Standards

Standards are not in place for all aspects of youth in custody and there is inconsistency in the degree of detail in the standards that exist.

I have raised this issue in every annual report since I was appointed as Children's Advocate. I have been repeatedly reassured that standards of care would be introduced and a monitoring mechanism established to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect these young people. The table on pages 22 to 25 clearly outlines the numerous attempts I have made in this regard and the response I have received from the Departments of Social Services and Justice. Where is the accountability? Where is the action? The fact that Saskatchewan charges and sentences more young people than any other jurisdiction in Canada is outrageous. The least we can do is ensure that the young people we do incarcerate are treated in accordance with a minimum set of standards.
Saskatchewan Education recognizes that there are children with

[illegible] to the Deputy Minister of Social Services in which I examined issues [illegible] youth in custody facilities. The following is an excerpt from this report:

[illegible] is a significant barrier to achieving [illegible] Youth Model and has a number of [illegible]. It causes many of the youth to be transferred from [illegible] to another, sometimes extensively. The rules and [illegible] are not the same from one facility to the next and [illegible] in education, treatment and relationships with staff [illegible] disrupted. Transfers also often represent [illegible] distance from family and other significant people. [illegible] of activities or room confinement that [illegible] when youth are admitted or transferred, [illegible] accompanying of levels are perceived as [illegible], irrespective of the reason for [illegible]. Transfer to jail cells, both RCMP and municipal, [illegible] seems to have the greatest negative impact. [illegible] regarding treatment of youth in these cells [illegible] formally investigated.

[illegible] and Adherence to Standards

[illegible] set in place for all aspects of youth in custody [illegible] inconsistency in the degree of detail in the [illegible]. Where there are indications that [illegible] are not adhered to by staff, there [illegible] possible explanations:

- [illegible] by staff to be completed.
- [illegible] with physical capacity or staff [illegible] with the ability to be completed.
- [illegible] be completely aware of required [illegible].

[illegible] for enhanced appeal processes [illegible] be informed of the procedures [illegible] every day of the week.

Administrative Fairness

Subscription to administrative fairness in dealing with youth in conflict with the law is evident from the Youth Model, but the concerns expressed by youth in custody indicate that fairness is not always seen to prevail. Much of the interaction process in youth justice is subjective and discretionary. In the youth custody facilities, negative staff/resident interaction was identified as the most frequent source of concern in the CAO files, followed by discipline, and case management. Disrespectful, discriminatory and unfair treatment were factors in many of these complaints, as well as the inability for youth to make themselves heard.

There appear to be significant inconsistencies between procedures and treatment of youth at the different facilities. Some of these differences are positive, the result of unique initiatives or qualities on the part of a particular facility, but others are not. Of greatest concern are the differences that are the result of some facilities not meeting certain standards. Some differences are confusing to the youth, especially when they are transferred frequently. Sometimes the inconsistencies mean that some youth have fewer opportunities for access to treatment, education, vocational training, or family contacts.

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Systemic advocacy issues may be identified in a number of ways. Sometimes several children, young people or community members raise the same issue or concern and a systemic advocacy issue is identified by the frequency of the complaint. Occasionally a single complaint is so compelling that individual advocacy is inadequate – a system change is needed to improve services for all children. Often the issue is a major social issue that impacts or affects children, like poverty or the sexual abuse of children through the sex trade. In the past five years, several systemic issues have been prioritized in my Office and we have utilized a number of different strategies to influence those in authority to improve services for children.

The good news is that rarely does government disagree with the desired outcomes that are identified by my Office. In fact, I think that the pressure I put on government to evaluate programs and services in terms of children's well-being is welcomed. The sad news is that change takes time. While decisions are being made and new practices and policies are being introduced, children and young people do not believe that anyone is listening to them or responding to their needs. While there is significant action in some areas, there are other matters that still need a lot of attention.

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In 1999 I provided a report to the Deputy Minister of Social Services in which I examined issues presented to my Office by 133 youth in custody facilities. The following is an excerpt from this report:

Overcrowding
Overcrowding seems to be a significant barrier to achieving the objectives of the Youth Model and has a number of impacts. It causes many of the youth to be transferred from one facility to another, sometimes extensively. The rules and procedures are not the same from one facility to the next and continuity in education, treatment and relationships with staff and peers is disrupted. Transfers also often represent increased distance from family and other significant people. As well, curtailment of activities or room confinement that routinely occurs when youth are admitted or transferred, along with the downgrading of levels are perceived as punishment by residents, irrespective of the reason for transfer. Transfer to jail cells, both RCMP and municipal, understandably seems to have the greatest negative impact. Specific incidents regarding treatment of youth in these cells are currently being formally investigated.

Standards and Adherence to Standards
Standards are not in place for all aspects of youth in custody and there is inconsistency in the degree of detail in the standards that exist. Where there are indications that procedures and standards are not adhered to by staff, there appears to be at least three possible explanations:

1. A lack of willingness by staff to be compliant.
2. Circumstances such as physical capacity or staff overload interfere with the ability to be compliant.
3. Staff may not be completely aware of required procedures.

There also seems to be a need for enhanced appeal processes to be in place. Residents must be informed of the procedures and these must be accessible every day of the week.

Administrative Fairness
Subscription to administrative fairness in dealing with youth in conflict with the law is evident from the Youth Model, but the concerns expressed by youth in custody indicate that fairness is not always seen to prevail. Much of the interaction process in youth justice is subjective and discretionary. In the youth custody facilities, negative staff/resident interaction was identified as the most frequent source of concern in the CAO files, followed by discipline, and case management. Disrespectful, discriminatory and unfair treatment were factors in many of these complaints, as well as the inability for youth to make themselves heard.

There appear to be significant inconsistencies between procedures and treatment of youth at the different facilities. Some of these differences are positive, the result of unique initiatives or qualities on the part of a particular facility, but others are not. Of greatest concern are the differences that are the result of some facilities not meeting certain standards. Some differences are confusing to the youth, especially when they are transferred frequently. Sometimes the inconsistencies mean that some youth have fewer opportunities for access to treatment, education, vocational training, or family contacts.

Young People in Open or Secure Custody in Saskatchewan

CAO Issue Concerning Standards of Care	Key Advocacy Actions Taken[1]
Know Their Rights and Responsibilities ▪ On admission to a facility, all children and youth must be given a copy of the rules governing the facility. They must be provided this information in a manner that enables full comprehension. They must also be given information about disciplinary requirements and complaint procedures. There must be safeguards to protect children who make complaints.	**April 1995 – Researcher to Review Advocacy Needs** ▪ Over 200 youth in facilities were interviewed. All facilities were visited and meetings were held with managers and staff. A report and recommendations were provided to the Deputy Minister, DSS on May 21, 1996. **CAO Education and Awareness Activities** ▪ The CAO actively promotes an understanding of the role and authority of the CAO. The CAO regularly visits the facilities and several communications tools have been developed to increase youth awareness of their right to contact the CAO.
Monitoring ▪ There is a need for strict monitoring of the conditions under which children deprived of their liberty are treated. ▪ Standards must be established for institutions, services and facilities for children and a mechanism must be established to ensure that these standards are complied with through appropriate monitoring.	**May 1995 – Letter to Director of North Battleford Youth Centre** ▪ Youth were locked in cells until 12:30 PM on Saturdays and Sundays because of staff shortages. **May 1995 – Letter to Director of North Battleford Youth Centre** ▪ The general condition of the Open Custody Cottage was such that significant repairs and clean-up were urgently required. **July 1995 – Letter to Director, Kenosee Youth Camp** ▪ Some residents did not have access to educational programs as they were not permitted to attend the community schools and there was no facility based educational program provided. **July 1995 – Letter to Director, Dales House** ▪ Dales House was very crowded resulting in some children sleeping on the floor or in a basement with inadequate protections for safety. **September 1996 to April 1999 – Multiple Contacts with DSS** ▪ Complaint received regarding the living conditions at Yarrow Youth Farm, including problems with the septic system backing up into bedrooms, mice, a fuel tank located under house, and general lack of maintenance. **June 1997 – CAO wrote to DM Justice and DM Social Services** ▪ Several concerns were raised: transportation issues, holding youth in police cells, overcrowding in provincial court cells and other concerns. A priority that was recognized was "to ensure that youth sentenced are treated with dignity in facilities that conform to acceptable standards." **October 1997 – Letter to Director of the Prince Albert Youth Centre** ▪ Concern was raised about youth sleeping in the "boot room", sharing bedrooms and about school attendance. **July 1998 – Researcher to Review Concerns Raised with the CAO** ▪ All complaints by youth from open or secure facilities received by the CAO between May 1, 1997 and July 15, 1998 were examined to determine the most current issues that youth felt were important to seek assistance to resolve. A comprehensive report was provided to DSS on March 19, 1999. **October 1998 – Letter to the Ministers of Social Services and Justice** ▪ Following a serious incident in relation to youth in custody, CAO raised issues with Ministers. The CAO urged "an immediate, short-term solution…to ensuring these young people are safe and are cared for in a humane and dignified manner."

[1] Note: Individual advocacy concerns raised by young people are not included. Advocacy actions and DSS responses to individual issues are ongoing.

DSS Response to December 1999	Status of Issue in CAO
April 1995-November 1995 ▪ DSS central office and facility staff assisted in the gathering of information for this report. This cooperation was greatly appreciated.	**Concluded**
June 1996 Onwards: ▪ The issues identified became a part of the ongoing discussions of systemic issues between the CAO and DSS. DSS initiated a "Youth Voice" committee to examine how participation of youth would be accomplished.	**Ongoing**
June 1995 ▪ Director advised that youth would be released from cells at 11:00 AM and that additional staff would be called in to accommodate this.	**Resolved**
July 1996 ▪ Director advised that the Youth Cottage was being vacated and that an open custody facility was to be opened at Drumming Hill, Sweet Grass Reserve.	**Resolved**
November 1998 ▪ A full-time teacher was employed at Kenosee Youth Camp in November, 1998. ▪ DSS established an Education Committee to review the educational services provided to youth in open and secure facilities. The Committee has not yet met.	**Resolved** **Ongoing**
November 1995 ▪ Director acknowledged that the facility did not meet minimum residential services standards. Children were moved to single rooms and out of the basement.	**Resolved**
April 1999 ▪ A new Yarrow open custody facility was constructed and officially opened.	**Resolved**
August 1997 ▪ DSS introduced a Standards Coordinator and a Standards Committee was established. **January 1998** ▪ The DM's responded to the concerns raised in June, 1997 by acknowledging that there were issues and that these required immediate action.	**Ongoing** **Ongoing**
October 1997 ▪ The use of the "boot room" was immediately discontinued. Youth continue to share bedrooms in this facility. ▪ Residents are expected to attend local schools. Problems persist when the local school is unable or unwilling to accept the residents.	**Resolved** **Ongoing**
January 1999 ▪ The themes identified in this report were presented to a Joint DSS/SGEU UMAC committee. DSS agreed to circulate this report to all youth custody facilities. This report was not publicly released. To date, DSS has not formally responded to the issues identified in this report.	**Ongoing**
November 1998 ▪ The Ministers responded in detail outlining actions taken and proposed to address the issues related to the care of these youth. They stated: "We want to assure you that we are working hard to deliver safe, effective youth custody programming." **November 1999** ▪ DSS reported that the planned completion date for the written standards and policy is January 31, 2000. No implementation date has been reported to the CAO.	**Ongoing** **Ongoing**

Young People in Open or Secure Custody in Saskatchewan

CAO Issue Concerning Standards of Care	Key Advocacy Actions Taken[1]
Use of RCMP and City Police Cells ▪ Placing a child in isolation, holding children in facilities designed for adults and subjecting children to degrading treatment are unacceptable.	**July 1995 – The CA wrote to the Director of Kilburn Hall** ▪ Concerns about using RCMP cells in Saskatoon to house young people when overcrowding occurs in the youth facilities were identified. **September 1996 – The CA wrote to the DM and to the Minister of Social Services** ▪ The use of RCMP cells was raised again. Letter stated: "the use of these cells is not consistent with your stated program policies and goals and, in my opinion, must be discontinued... The interests and well-being of children receiving services from your department are being compromised by the crowded conditions they are required to live in." **1997 - 1999** ▪ The CAO continued to raise concerns about the use of municipal city police cells and RCMP cells as an urgent issue at regular CAO/DSS meetings.
Access to Family ▪ The CAO does not agree that distance from family is an example of an exceptional circumstance that would restrict access to family visits or telephone calls.	**July 1995 – Letter to Director, Orcadia Youth Centre** ▪ Youth who lived a significant distance from their home community had limited access to family visits. The costs of travel and telephone calls were identified as an issue.
Best Interests ▪ This best interests principle demands that governments allocate adequate resources for children, particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable children.	**February 1997 – The CAO wrote to the DSS** ▪ Recommending that "a complete review of the services and programs offered to residents of Kilburn Hall" be undertaken. ▪ An investigation by the CAO of a number of concerns from youth at Kilburn Hall resulted in this and other recommendations to DSS.
Safety ▪ Children who are being held pending a court hearing or who are being transported for court related purposes must be treated in a manner consistent with safeguarding the child and promoting his or her sense of dignity and worth.	**July 1996 – CAO contacted DSS regarding a complaint** ▪ Transportation and security issues for youth being transported from a secure facility to a provincial court house and back were identified to DSS and Justice.

[1] Note: Individual advocacy concerns raised by young people are not included. Advocacy actions and DSS responses to individual issues are ongoing.

DSS Response to December 1999	Status of Issue in CAO
October 1996 • The DM, DSS acknowledged: " I am very concerned about the problem of crowding in youth facilities and I am committed to take the required immediate action to eliminate the use of police cells as a crowding response."	**Ongoing**
August 1997 • DSS and the RCMP revised the protocols regarding the treatment of these youth and provided increased access to recreation, family visits and opportunities for showers, etc. However, the CAO is still concerned with use of RCMP cells.	**Ongoing**
May 1999 • DSS informed the CAO that municipal cells would no longer be used to hold remanded or sentenced youth.	**Resolved**
• Four RCMP detachments have been designated as temporary places of custody and continue to be used to house youth during periods of high custody counts or during transfers. The protocols regarding family visits, access to recreation or showers are not consistently practiced.	**Ongoing**
July 1995 to Present • This problem has persisted with resolution occurring on an individual basis, only.	**Ongoing**
December 1998 • Transportation costs for northern youth were identified as a barrier for youth placed in southern facilities. Youth from northern communities were denied a Temporary Release because of the travel costs. **January 1999** • Youth from the far north had telephone calls limited because of the cost, while local youth were not subject to the same telephone limitations.	**Ongoing**
March 1997 • The DM, DSS informed the CAO that a complete review of the services and programs offered to the residents of Kilburn Hall would be completed. The CAO requested updates on the progress of this Review on several occasions. **September 1999** • The report was completed and provided to the CAO. In the interim, several incidents occurred at Kilburn Hall resulting in further investigations. This matter remains under review by the CAO.	**Under Review**
July 1996 • The young person who raised the concern was provided with additional safeguards the next day.	**Resolved**
July 1996 to Present • The Provincial Court has attempted to improve safeguards for youth in the provincial court holding cells; however, the security issues and crowding persist, particularly in Saskatoon.	**Ongoing**
• Transportation issues have been examined by the RCMP who provide Prisoner Escort for youth and adults. The RCMP are completing a Prisoner Escort and Transportation Review and recommendations regarding transporting and holding youth are anticipated in 2000.	**Under Review**

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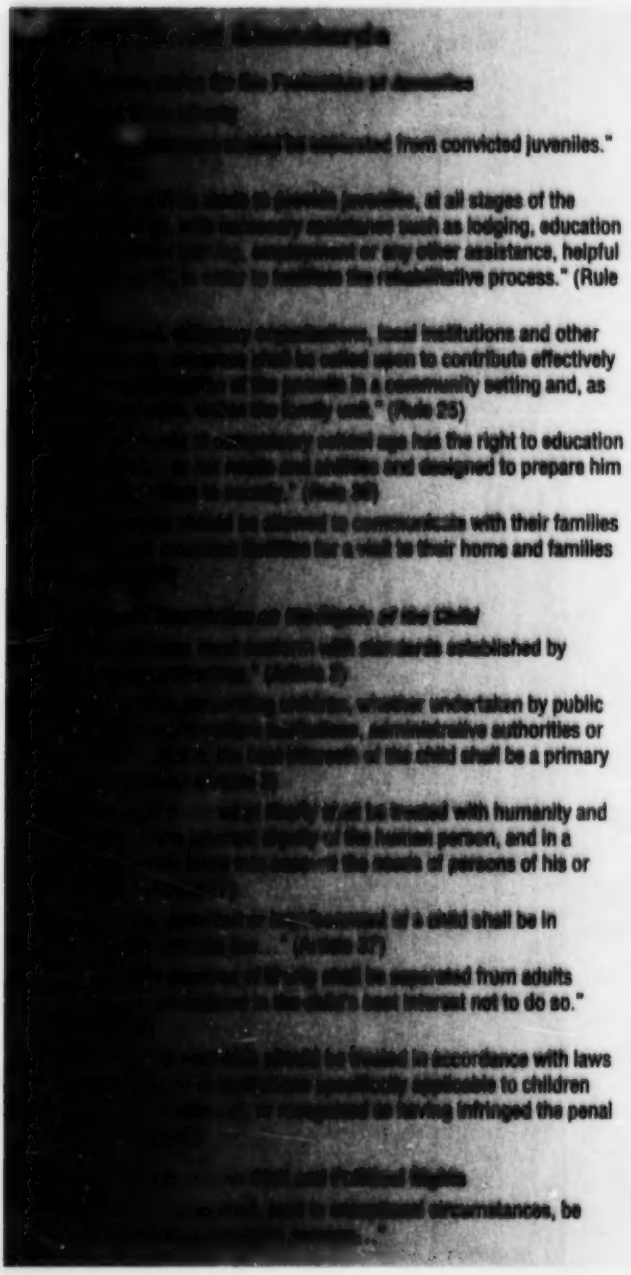
A Need for Action

I do not apologize for using strong language. I am very concerned for the young people and the staff in our youth facilities. I do recognize that many young people in these facilities are cared for with respect and compassion and that the staff are, for the most part, very dedicated to providing quality care in a safe environment. I also recognize that the young people who call the CAO are looking for support in a system that too often fails them.



What can be done? It is not enough to be compassionate – we need to act! This is the heart of the situation – we must all take some action. Clearly it is not enough for the Children's Advocate to raise this issue. I continue to receive positive responses and reassurances, but the issues have remained, and in some places escalated. In order to resolve a number of the issues that are repeatedly presented to my Office, I urge the government to:

- Introduce consistent standards in all youth facilities and establish a mechanism to assure compliance with the standards. The standards should, at minimum, be consistent with international agreements.
- Provide every young person in a facility with an orientation to their rights and responsibilities in a manner and at a time that is appropriate for the young person.
- Develop discipline policies that ensure due process and opportunity for appeals.
- Reduce over-utilization of youth custody facilities.
- Involve young people in educational, treatment and rehabilitation programs that will enable them to succeed in the community after discharge.
- Provide staff with adequate training and support.
- Involve the young person's community in planning for their reintegration.

Changing the *Young Offenders Act*

Help me understand the age debate!

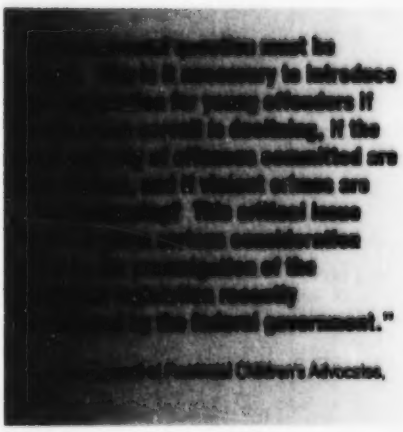
A *Youth Criminal Justice Act* was introduced as Bill C-3 in the House of Commons in 1999. This proposed Act defines how young people, aged 12 to 17 years, will be treated if they come into conflict with the law.

One of the things about this legislation that confuses and concerns me is that our children, even those as young as 14, could be subject to adult courts and adult sanctions for some behaviours that have been defined as extreme. If I understand the argument, these young people are to take responsibility for their crimes and be held accountable as if they were adults. Is that what you understand too?

The confusing and inconsistent part of this proposed legislation is that we are still intent (as we should be, in my opinion) on protecting our children from responsibilities that we believe they are not yet ready for. For example, we have laws that prohibit children from driving until they are 16; they cannot purchase tobacco products or alcohol until they are 18 and 19; they cannot vote or sit on a board of a non-profit organization until they are 18. Yet somehow we seem to think that they can and should be held accountable as if they are adults when they break the law! If this is confusing for me, I wonder what young people make of it?

On the one hand we seem prepared to make children take adult responsibility for criminal behaviour, while on the other hand we are reluctant to give them adult responsibilities in other areas of their lives. I think it is time to reflect on our adult responsibilities for our children.

There are a great many things that responsible adults can do to nurture and support children to become productive, contributing and responsible citizens. We need to hold ourselves responsible for the difficulties and challenges that some of our young people face. We need to stop blaming children for our adult failures.



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International Standards

United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty

- "Untried detainees should be separated from convicted juveniles." (Rule 13)
- "Efforts shall be made to provide juveniles, at all stages of the proceedings, with necessary assistance such as lodging, education or vocational training, employment or any other assistance, helpful and practical, in order to facilitate the rehabilitative process." (Rule 24)
- "Volunteers, voluntary organizations, local institutions and other community resources shall be called upon to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation of the juvenile in a community setting and, as far as possible, within the family unit." (Rule 25)
- "Every juvenile of compulsory school age has the right to education suited to his or her needs and abilities and designed to prepare him or her for return to society." (Rule 38)
- "...Juveniles should be allowed to communicate with their families ... to leave detention facilities for a visit to their home and families ..." (Rule 59)

United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

- "All institutions must conform with standards established by competent authorities." (Article 3)
- "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration." (Article 3)
- "Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age." (Article 37)
- "The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law..." (Article 37)
- "Every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so." (Article 37)
- "All under-18-year-olds should be treated in accordance with laws and procedures in institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law." (Article 40)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

- "Accused persons shall, save in exceptional circumstances, be segregated from convicted persons..."

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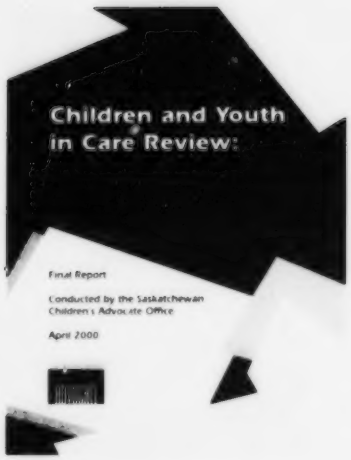
"A fundamental question must be posed. Why is it necessary to introduce new legislation for young offenders if youth crime overall is declining, if the vast majority of offences committed are non-violent, and if violent crimes are also decreasing? This critical issue must be given serious consideration prior to the promulgation of the proposed legislation recently introduced by the federal government."

Canadian Council of Provincial Children's Advocates, 1999.

Caring for Children in Care

Every effort must be made to support families to care for their own children while ensuring that the children who are in care are safe and receiving quality services. Removing children from the care of their parents, extended families and communities is very painful for everyone, but especially for the nearly 3,000 children in care in Saskatchewan.



A major review of the needs of children living in foster care was conducted in 1999 and a major report will have been made public prior to the release of this Annual Report.

The need for this comprehensive and public review of the services provided for children and youth living in foster care was identified by a number of concerned individuals and groups across Saskatchewan, particularly many of the young people already in care. In addition, prompted by tragic events in 1997, the Minister of Social Services requested that the Children's Advocate undertake a review of the needs of children living in foster care.

The goal of the *Children and Youth in Care Review: LISTEN to Their Voices* was to develop recommendations to assist the government in creating positive change for children in care in Saskatchewan. The Review consisted of an extensive examination of the literature, public and individual consultations with more than 1,100 Saskatchewan residents and a review of a random sample of files of children in care.

Ten themes emerged during this Review. These themes outline directions for the government and the community to take in the future to address the needs of children living in care. Aspects of each of these themes were presented to the Review Team by virtually every group or individual consulted. The Review generated seven primary recommendations and 45 sub-recommendations that focus on improving services for children in care.

Making these recommendations a reality will be the main challenge following this Review. What will happen next will depend on everyone – from politicians, government officials, children, parents, community leaders, First Nations and Metis Nation people and others. The 52 recommendations are intended to offer an invitation to government to work with community members to create a joint vision for the future. While the practice issues identified in this report must be addressed, the report highlights the need to involve community members in shaping a child welfare system that will best fit the needs of the people it serves.

"'I'm an expert on foster care. Nobody knows foster care better than a foster kid. You can't learn the feeling of showing up at somebody's house for the first time and now they're gonna be your parents.' (Female, youth formerly in care, 20)."

Saskatchewan Children's Advocate, 2000.

Fair Schools

In 1999, the Minister of Education announced a Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of Schools and the Children's Advocate was pleased to make a submission to this Task Force. I raised several areas of concern with the Task Force, including the need for an independent complaints review process.

Independent Complaints Review Process

In 1997, *The Education Act* in Saskatchewan was amended to include section 186.1 which provides pupils with a disability or their parents with a process to have a disagreement about a decision made by a school board reviewed. This was a significant and positive step towards ensuring that pupils and parents have access to a complaints review process based on principles of administrative fairness. The Education Regulations were also amended to provide a context for these reviews. Pupils who do not meet the criteria for low cost or high cost disabled pupil designations are still not eligible to access this review process and are not provided with an independent complaints process. All parents can access section 148 of *The Education Act*, which entitles them to immediate access to procedures for investigation, and mediation of disputes that might arise regarding their child or children. Section 148 does not, however, provide for an impartial review, nor does it have any built-in mechanisms to protect parents or students against retribution or retaliation. Mechanisms for mediation provided by section 148 vary greatly from one school board to another and there is no provincial mechanism in place to ensure that a concern will be dealt with in a fair and consistent manner. Parents and pupils are not generally made aware of their rights as outlined in sections 148 and 186. Formal appeal procedures need to be introduced that are timely, flexible and user-friendly. The educational needs of children demand prompt attention.

"In Namibia, for example, an elected committee comprised of parent, teacher and student representatives deals with serious or repeated violations of school rules. This body can issue warnings, transfers, suspensions and expulsions. Violence and abuse of others' rights is not tolerated; however, the participation of the entire school community is invited in formulating rules and regulations-including the students themselves! It is believed that by including the voice of the children, the children themselves will help change attitudes and behavior in the schools."

UNICEF, 1998.

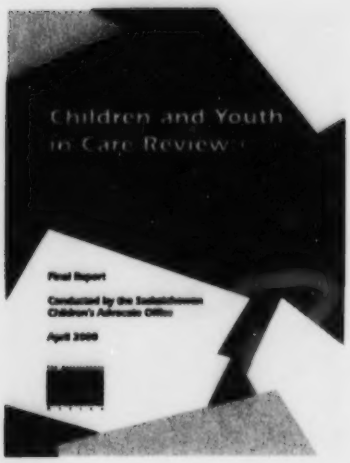
A Right to an Education

The right to an education is to be achieved on the basis of equal opportunity for all children. Disabled children, children of minority groups (such as First Nations or Metis children) and children who are being detained as a result of committing a crime require special protections to ensure that their rights to an education are not denied.

I raised a concern with the Task Force about students who are not attending school. How much responsibility does a child under the age of 16 have? Should a child be held responsible for his or her actions when these actions deprive him or her of something as important as a right to attend school?

Caring for Children in Care

Every effort must be made to support families to care for their own children while ensuring that the children who are in care are safe and receiving quality services. Removing children from the care of their parents, extended families and communities is very painful for everyone, but especially for the nearly 3,000 children in care in Saskatchewan.



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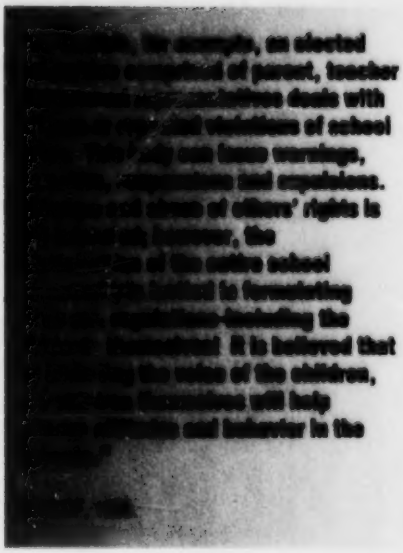

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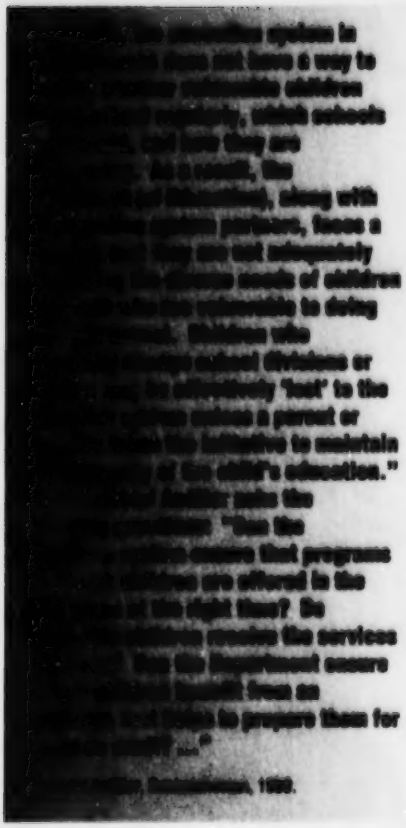


Saskatchewan Education recognizes that there are children with exceptional learning and behavioural problems who are not designated for per pupil funding. School divisions are required to provide special education programs and services to assist these students. The responsibility, in my view, is for educators to find ways to meaningfully include all children in school.

Banning Corporal Punishment in Saskatchewan Schools

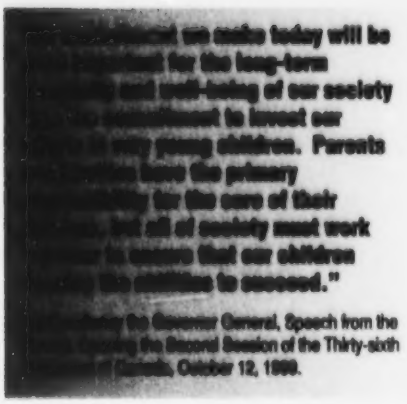
While the use of force as a means of correction or discipline is, admittedly, rarely used in Saskatchewan schools, it is still permitted in *The Education Act*. I raised this as a concern with the Task Force. The risk of being misunderstood and therefore inappropriately disciplined is very high for children who have, for example, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Attention Deficit Disorders or other conditions which contribute to impulsive or aggressive behaviours.

"The CAO has repeatedly raised with the Department of Education concerns regarding the use of force in Saskatchewan schools. The former Minister of Education assured me that school boards would be asked to consider developing policies to prohibit the use of force in Saskatchewan public schools. The Canadian Council of Provincial Children's Advocates (CCPCA), of which I am a member, has recently requested intervenor status in an Ontario court case in which the constitutional validity of section 43 of the Criminal Code is being challenged. The CCPCA has a special interest in the use of physical force for the management, correction and rehabilitation of children in institutional settings. It is my view that special needs children in institutional settings (such as schools, group homes, young offender facilities) are the most vulnerable as they have limited opportunity, and for some children, limited ability, to voice their concerns or to make choices. In addition, the Saskatchewan Council on Children, in October 1998, recommended to the Ministers participating in Saskatchewan's Action Plan for children that 'the provision in *The Education Act* permitting the use of corporal punishment in schools be repealed.'" (Presentation by the Saskatchewan CAO to the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of Schools, 1999)

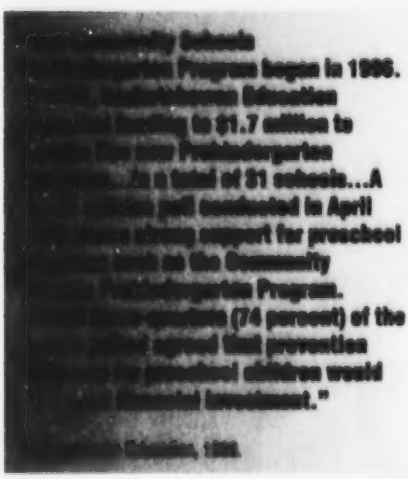
I am looking forward to the interim and final reports of this Task Force, which are to be released in 2000.

Supporting Our Youngest Children

During the last two decades, a convincing body of evidence has accumulated to indicate that unless children achieve minimal social competence by age six years, they have a high probability of being at risk throughout life (McClellan and Katz, 1993). Infants and young children need certain experiences, such as a secure attachment to a nurturing adult, positive sensory stimulation, and positive social interactions to ensure their future well-being. In addition, the well-being of children is directly related to the well-being of their caregivers, families and communities.



The period from preconception to five years of age has been described as the investment phase for healthy child development. During these critical early years, when the investment is highest, public expenditures in most countries for early childhood programs tend to be relatively small. On the other hand, higher public expenditures are often required later to address the problems resulting from inadequate services and supports during infancy and early childhood. A recent study of child care in Canada revealed that every dollar invested in early childhood would result in a two dollar savings in later life (Cleveland-Krashinsky, 1998). The human and monetary benefits of healthy early child development are well documented and all point to the need to invest in our children now.



The DSS recognizes the positive potential of investing in early childhood and in September 1999 took another step to ensure that young children with special needs have access to appropriate developmental services. The Child Care Subsidy Program (DSS) will now pay the full fee for preschool children who are referred to developmental licensed child care programs when the parents are on assistance and not generally eligible for child care funding.

"Currently, the education system in Saskatchewan does not have a way to monitor whether vulnerable children attend school regularly, which schools they attend, and how they are progressing. As a result, the Department (of Education), along with its education system partners, faces a high risk that they are not adequately addressing the diverse needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to doing poorly in school. Children who frequently change school divisions or systems may be effectively 'lost' to the education system unless a parent or guardian takes the initiative to maintain the continuity of the child's education." The Provincial Auditor asks the following questions: "Can the education system ensure that programs for at-risk children are offered in the right place at the right time? Do vulnerable children receive the services they need? Can the Department ensure that all children benefit from an education that helps to prepare them for life as an adult? ..."

Provincial Auditor, Saskatchewan, 1999.

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"No commitment we make today will be more important for the long-term prosperity and well-being of our society than the commitment to invest our efforts in very young children. Parents and families have the primary responsibility for the care of their children, but all of society must work together to ensure that our children develop the abilities to succeed."

Her Excellency the Governor General, Speech from the Throne, Opening the Second Session of the Thirty-sixth Parliament of Canada, October 12, 1999.

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"The Community Schools Prekindergarten Program began in 1996. In 1999, Saskatchewan Education expanded funding to $1.7 million to include five new Prekindergarten Programs...In a total of 31 schools...A public opinion poll conducted in April 1999 shows strong support for preschool programs such as the Community Schools Prekindergarten Program. Almost three-quarters (74 percent) of the people polled agreed that prevention programs for preschool children would be a good financial investment."

Saskatchewan Education, 1999.

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Research

Research activities are undertaken to support, inform and influence systemic advocacy and public education activities.

"Certain negative behaviours among children are precursors of what may become criminal activities as they grow older. These behaviours include lying and cheating, destroying their own or other children's things, stealing within or outside the home, and vandalizing property. Children in poor families are twice as likely to have scores within the top ten per cent in terms of frequency of delinquent behaviours, compared to children in modest-income families, and they are nearly three times as likely to have delinquency scores as children in high-income families."

Ross & Roberts, 1999.

There are several issues that are of concern to me and the staff of the CAO and these issues affect many children and youth in Saskatchewan. The CAO is frequently invited to participate in or comment on societal issues that impact on the well-being of children. Due to limited resources, the CAO has been unable to fully realize its mandate in this area.

Poverty

Poverty continues to be a significant underlying issue that impacts on Saskatchewan children and families. Saskatchewan has made a significant commitment to reducing child and family poverty. According to the Campaign 2000 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada (1999), Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada where the child poverty rate has actually decreased in the last ten years.

Sexual Abuse

The Exploitation of Children Through the Sex Trade

The CAO had the privilege of working with the Saskatoon Tribal Council Urban First Nations Services Inc. and the Saskatoon Police Service in planning *Street Symposium '99 Healing Ourselves, Strengthening Our Communities, A Western Canadian Gathering*, held in May 1999 in Saskatoon.

"Officially, Canada recognizes the child sex trade as child abuse and yet it continue to thrive. Why? Sexually exploited youth exist in a world of shadows, invisible. They are seen as unreachable, someone else's child. Too often their life in the sex trade is seen as their choice. What are we doing about this? Solutions require commitment from all levels — from communities, from government, from each of us. The voices of the exploited children and youth are key to the success of any strategy to address this complex issue."

Save the Children Canada, 1999.

The intention of the Symposium was to learn more effective ways of providing service to street involved youth. This was done with an exchange of information between service providers from Western Canada in presentation form. Most importantly, participants learned from the street involved youth who came to share their stories or do presentations with their ideas on what was needed.

The Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan is to be commended for establishing, in December 1999, a Special Committee on Child Prostitution. This all-party committee will make recommendations on the abuse and exploitation of children through the sex trade. The first report is expected in the spring of the year 2000.

Administration

A five-year strategic plan for the CAO was developed in 1996. Key result areas were identified and specific goals established. These key areas continue to form the basis of the work of the CAO and are described in the preceding pages of this Annual Report.

As with any office, there are also administrative responsibilities that must be attended to in order for the goals of the Office to be achieved. Deciding to be inclusive of youth and community members in the advocacy work of the Office has presented interesting challenges. Transportation and accommodation arrangements, meals, honoraria and other related expenses for the over 60 volunteers who work with the CAO staff on the Provincial Youth Delegation, Child and Youth in Care Review Panel and the Child Death Advisory Committee have required a concerted effort from my staff with the support and flexibility of the Legislative Assembly Office.

The work of the Office continues to expand, resulting in increases to the budget and staff of the CAO.

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Marcel St. Onge, Advocate
Roxane Schury, Advocate
Rhonda Johannson, Advocate Assistant
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Gloria Hubert, Administrative Assistant

Children's Advocate Budget

	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Salaries	380,100	520,480	606,000
Accommodations	32,700	32,700	32,700
Other Expenses	88,200	229,820[1]	312,300[2]
TOTAL	$ 501,000	$ 783,000	$ 951,000

[1] Includes $75,000 (one time funding) to conduct the Children and Youth in Care Review.
[2] Includes $99,000 (one time funding) to conduct the Children and Youth in Care Review.

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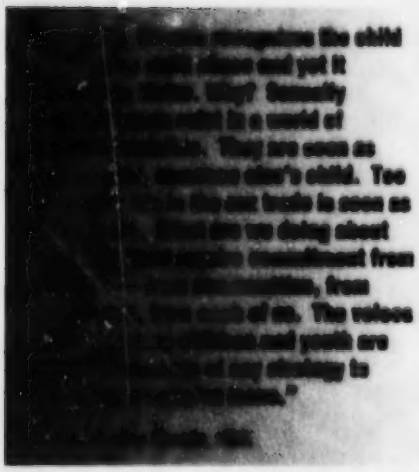

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Of National Interest

A National Children's Agenda

A National Children's Agenda was launched by the Federal/Provincial/ Territorial Ministerial Council on Social Policy Renewal in May 1999 in Saskatoon. This National Children's Agenda is intended to provide a framework for government and community actions to improve the well-being of Canada's children. During the spring and summer of 1999, several stakeholder roundtable discussions and consultations were facilitated throughout Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada in order to get community input into the development of a national strategy to address the needs of Canadian children and their families. The CAO was invited to a Western Canadian Roundtable in Edmonton in June 1999 and the Provincial Youth Delegates participated in a consultation in August.

Canadian Council of Provincial Children's Advocates (CCPCA)

The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office continues to be an active member of the Canadian Council of Provincial Children's Advocates (CCPCA). In 1999, the Council focused its work on federal initiatives that affect children and youth. Key actions of the Council in 1999 included:

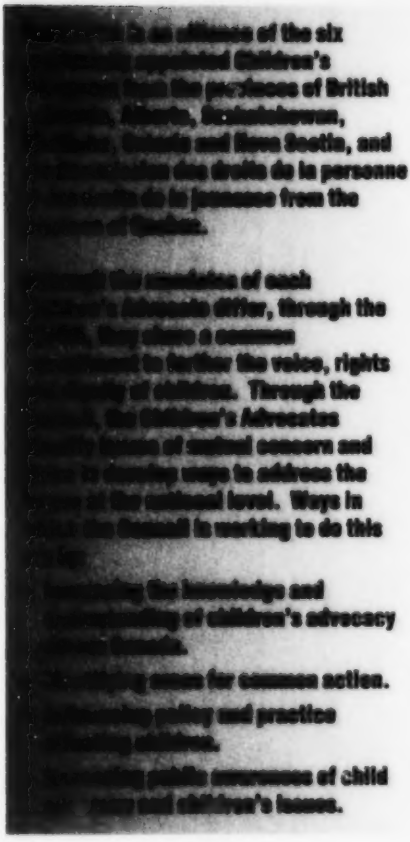
Charter Challenge to section 43 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*

In November 1998 a Charter challenge to section 43 of the *Criminal Code of Canada* was commenced by the Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law. "The primary basis for the challenge is the legal argument that the defense infringes the child's right to equal benefit and protection of the law under section 15 of the Charter, and the child's right to security of the person under section 7 of the Charter." (Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law, 1999)

A coalition of groups, including the Council, filed an application to intervene in the matter in support of the application by the Canadian Foundation. Intervenor status in support of the application was granted only to the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. Of interest, the Canadian Teachers' Federation was granted intervenor status with respect to the effect of section 43 on teachers. They oppose the repeal of section 43, although their stated policy position is that teachers should not use corporal punishment on students. There has been no decision on this matter to date.

Presentation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights of the House of Commons Regarding Bill C-3 *Youth Criminal Justice Act*

The Council supported two young people, one from Saskatchewan, to make a presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee. The CCPCA also submitted a brief articulating our concerns and comments about Bill C-3. A copy of this brief is available on request. The Council specifically questioned the need for this Bill. A fundamental question was posed to the Standing Committee: "Why is it necessary to introduce new legislation for young offenders if youth crime overall is declining, if the vast majority of offences committed are non-violent, and if violent crimes are also decreasing?" (CCPCA, 1999)



Children's Commissioner

The CCPCA continues to support a proposal to create a Commissioner for Canada's Children that Senator Landon Pearson and Karen Kraft-Sloan, MP, have widely circulated. Senator Pearson visited Saskatchewan in May 1999 during which time she met with several government officials and Cabinet Ministers. The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office had the privilege of hosting a meeting between Senator Pearson and several First Nations representatives to discuss the proposed Children's Commissioner.

Permanency Planning

The provincial Children's Advocates and the provincial/territorial Directors of Child Welfare agreed, in 1999, to develop a joint project to promote effective permanency planning for children and youth in care. There are a number of considerations that were highlighted in our preliminary discussions, including the need to involve youth and First Nations representatives at the beginning of any project such as this. Terms of Reference for this will be developed in 2000 when young people and First Nations Child and Family Services Agency representatives are included in the discussions.

Presentation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights of the House of Commons Regarding Bill C-3 *Youth Criminal Justice Act*

The Council supported two young people, one from Saskatchewan, to make a presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee. The CCPCA also submitted a brief articulating our concerns and comments about Bill C-3. A copy of this brief is available on request. The Council specifically questioned the need for this Bill. A fundamental question was posed to the Standing Committee: "Why is it necessary to introduce new legislation for young offenders if youth crime overall is declining, if the vast majority of offences committed are non-violent, and if violent crimes are also decreasing?" (CCPCA, 1999)

The CCPCA is an alliance of the six provincially appointed Children's Advocates from the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia, and the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse from the province of Quebec.

Although the mandates of each Children's Advocate differ, through the CCPCA, they share a common commitment to further the voice, rights and dignity of children. Through the Council, the Children's Advocates identify issues of mutual concern and strive to develop ways to address the issues at the national level. Ways in which the Council is working to do this are by:

- **Increasing the knowledge and understanding of children's advocacy across Canada.**
- **Identifying areas for common action.**
- **Influencing policy and practice affecting children.**
- **Increasing public awareness of child advocacy and children's issues.**

Children's Commissioner

The CCPCA continues to support a proposal to create a Commissioner for Canada's Children that Senator Landon Pearson and Karen Kraft-Sloan, MP, have widely circulated. Senator Pearson visited Saskatchewan in May 1999 during which time she met with several government officials and Cabinet Ministers. The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office had the privilege of hosting a meeting between Senator Pearson and several First Nations representatives to discuss the proposed Children's Commissioner.

Permanency Planning

The provincial Children's Advocates and the provincial/territorial Directors of Child Welfare agreed in 1999 to develop a joint project to promote effective permanency planning for children and youth in care. There are a number of considerations that were highlighted in our preliminary discussions, including the need to involve youth and First Nations representatives at the beginning of any project such as this. Terms of Reference for this will be developed in 2000 when young people and First Nations Child and Family Services Agency representatives are included in the discussions.

Planning Ahead

This year, 1999, is the first year since the Office opened five years ago, that I have begun to see some stability in the individual advocacy work of the Office. While this is welcomed, I recognize that the need for public education respecting the interests and well-being of children and the systemic advocacy work of the Office are still growing. There is also an increased demand for the CAO to formally investigate certain concerns, such as some of the deaths of children or particularly confusing complaints that were not resolved.

The obvious question, and one that I personally reflect on frequently, is how can I encourage government and community members to take a more active advocacy role, thus reducing the demands on a provincially appointed Children's Advocate? Most of the recommendations I have made in these last five years are meant to encourage government to develop and implement practices and policies that will ensure that children are protected and treated fairly. It is not only government that is responsible for how children, and their families, are treated. Community members have a major role to play in making our children a priority. Children should be recognized as important citizens and treated with the fairness and respect to which they, as all citizens, are entitled. Sadly, this does not always happen, for children or for adults and therefore an independent advocate adds to the safeguards we have in place for our children.

As I have identified throughout this report, there are a number of ongoing issues that I will continue with in the upcoming year. Firstly, and of continued primary importance, the children and young people who call the CAO will receive assistance promptly. This is the foundation of our work. I remain committed to promoting resolution to individual and systemic issues that impact on children and families.

I have also made a commitment to review the deaths of children. This commitment needs to be revisited as there are a number of child deaths that are not systematically reviewed by any independent agency and this is of concern. In order for these child deaths to be comprehensively reviewed, a multi-disciplinary approach is needed.

My Office will continue to support the development of the Provincial Youth Delegation. We are looking forward to new Delegates joining the group in 2000 and to a workshop in the fall, focussing on youth participation.

First Nations and Metis Nation children are over-represented in many of the government services and programs for children. This is of concern to me and I want to support First Nations and Metis Nation advocacy with and for children. In addition, the needs of northern and far northern children and families are very compelling. My northern travels in 1999 pointed out to me the need for my Office to be more accessible to northern residents.

In closing, as 1999 marks the end of the first five years of the Children's Advocate Office in Saskatchewan, I want to thank the Legislative Assembly and the citizens of Saskatchewan for having the vision to create this Office for the children of our province. On a personal note, I want to express to my staff, to all the volunteers, to the Review Team and to our families, my sincere appreciation for the continued commitment you make every day to the children in Saskatchewan. I also want to say thank you for the privilege of serving in this way.

Appendix A –
Mission, Vision and Principles

Mission Statement

To ensure the rights of children and youth are respected and valued in our communities and in government practice, policy and legislation.

Vision for Children

Saskatchewan children will grow in environments that support their well-being and enable them to reach their potential.

Principles of the Children's Advocate Office

The Children's Advocate Office believes that all people, particularly children, must be treated with respect, recognizing their inherent dignity as human persons.

The Children's Advocate Office will:

- Give priority to children in all activities undertaken by the Office
- Ensure that all advocacy services are respectful, appropriate, accessible, accountable, timely, lawful and consistent, irrespective of the child's location, circumstance, culture or background
- Respect the right to privacy of the child, as well as all other parties involved in the advocacy process
- Ensure that services are consistent with principles of administrative fairness
- Strive to create a safe, healthy, friendly, hospitable, and courteous work environment, which is supportive of the public and staff
- Use a team approach in the provision of services. All team members are expected to demonstrate high ethical standards and personal integrity
- Be independent of external associations in order to ensure that services remain child-focused

Appendix B –

Presentations by the Children's Advocate Office

Presentations at Conferences and Annual Meetings

- *Bullying in the Community*, Thunder Creek School Division, Moose Jaw
- *Child Death Review and Child Mortality Data Collection Working Meeting*, Saskatoon
- *Children, The Heart of our Future*, Saskatchewan Child Care Association National Child Day Celebrations, Regina
- *Empowering Youth*, Marguerite Riel Centre, Melfort
- *Love Can Build A Bridge Working with High-Risk Students*, Saskatchewan Federation Council for Exceptional Children and Moose Jaw Chapter, 43rd Annual Conference, Moose Jaw
- Northeast Teacher's Convention Planning Committee, Waskesiu Lake
- *Rebuilding Families for the 21st Century*, Saskatchewan First Nation: Regional Child Welfare Association Conference, Saskatoon
- Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers Annual Meeting and Convention, Yorkton
- Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, Annual General Meeting, Moose Jaw
- *Street Symposium '99 Healing Ourselves, Strengthening our Communities, A Western Canadian Gathering*, Saskatoon
- *Youth for Human Rights*, Second Annual Public Legal Education Conference, Saskatoon

Presentations to Community Groups and Agencies

- Ahtahkakoop FNCFSA, Ahtahkakoop
- Door of Hope, Meadow Lake
- Early Childhood Education Program, Meadow Lake
- Foster Families Association, Melfort
- Foster Families Support Group, Warman
- Human Rights Day, Amnesty International and Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, Saskatoon
- Mentoring Mothers, Moose Jaw
- National Child Welfare Directors' Meeting, Permanency Planning, Winnipeg Manitoba
- Northeast Early Childhood Intervention Meeting, Tisdale
- Parents Daycare Co-operative, Saskatoon
- Pipestone Health District, Broadview
- Provincial Council of Women, Regina
- Saskatchewan Community Homes Operators Association, Prince Albert
- Saskatoon Communities for Children, Children Not in School Working Group, Saskatoon
- Saskatoon Society for Autism, Saskatoon
- Special Education Review Committee, Saskatoon
- Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of Schools, Saskatoon

Presentations to Post-Secondary Education Students

- College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon
- Early Childhood Program, SIAST, Woodlands Campus, Prince Albert
- Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina, North Battleford
- Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina, Prince Albert
- Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina, Saskatoon[1]

[1] Note: More than one presentation given in 1999.

Presentations to Youth

- Alex Bishop, Green Lake
- Dale's House, Regina
- Drumming Hill Youth Centre, Sweetgrass Reserve
- E'cole Lakeview Career Days, Saskatoon
- Kenosee Youth Camp, Regina
- Kilburn Hall, Saskatoon[1]
- Nisbet Youth Centre, Prince Albert
- Norsask Unit, Prince Albert Correctional Centre, Prince Albert[1]
- Paul Dojack Youth Centre, Regina[1]
- Prince Albert Youth Residence, Prince Albert
- Sundance Group Home, Prince Albert
- Yarrow Youth Farm, Saskatoon[1]

Presentations to Employees of Government Departments or Agencies

(excluding meetings)

- Community Living Division, Regina
- Consultation and Information Meeting, RCMP Provost Services and Transportation Study, Regina
- Department of Social Services, Creighton
- Directors of Young Offenders, Department of Social Services, Saskatoon
- La Ronge Social Services, La Ronge[1]
- Mental Health Advisory Committee; Community Care Branch, Saskatchewan Mental Health, Regina
- Prince Albert Social Services, Prince Albert[1]
- Provincial Family Connections Program, Department of Social Services, North Battleford
- Provincial Young Offender Union Management Committee and Young Offenders Directors, Saskatoon
- Public Service Commission Management Orientation Program, Regina
- Regina Region Social Services, Regina
- 16 & 17-Year-Old Program Unit Meeting, Regina
- Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, La Ronge
- Youth Resource Centre, Saskatoon
- Youth Facilities
  - Alex Bishop, Green Lake
  - Dale's House, Regina
  - Kenosee Youth Camp, Regina
  - Nisbet Youth Centre, Prince Albert[1]
  - North Battleford Youth Centre, North Battleford
  - Orcadia Youth Residence, Yorkton
  - Paul Dojack Youth Centre, Regina[1]
  - Prince Albert Youth Residence, Prince Albert
  - Sundance Group Home, Prince Albert
  - Yarrow Youth Farm, Saskatoon

[1] Note: More than one presentation given in 1999.

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